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MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2013

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# MISSION STATEMENT

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## MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

*(Adopted Nov. 4, 1999)*

### Our **VISION**

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The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council envisions a society that values all of its members equally and provides opportunities so that all people are able to meet their needs, fulfill their dreams and participate in society.

### Our **MISSION**

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To ensure that persons with disabilities have opportunities to be as productive as possible by advising Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation that services provided to persons with disabilities are:

- ◆ of the highest quality.
- ◆ consumer directed.
- ◆ responsive to consumer choice.
- ◆ effective.
- ◆ individualized.
- ◆ culturally specific and relevant to labor market trends.

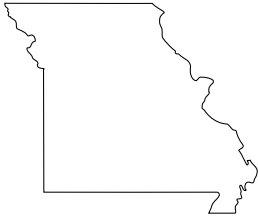
### Our **RESPONSIBILITIES**

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To work in partnership with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to achieve positive outcomes for persons with disabilities by:

- ◆ providing input on the state plan, policies and practices affecting services to persons with disabilities.
- ◆ identifying strategies to address the needs of people who are not being served or who are being underserved.
- ◆ obtaining and interpreting consumer input.
- ◆ identifying corrective action consistent with that input.
- ◆ advocating for adequate resources to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of all Missourians are met.

To support Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation in complying with applicable laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Workforce Investment Act, the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.



# MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

3024 Dupont Circle ■ Jefferson City, Missouri 65109  
Phone: 573-751-3251 ■ Fax: 573-751-1441

**Dennis Atkins**  
Viburnum  
Chairperson

**Aimee Wehmeier**  
St. Louis  
Vice Chairperson

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**Penny Adams**  
St. Joseph

**Karen Allan**  
Jefferson City

**James Ankrom**  
Smithville

**Daniel Cayou**  
Jefferson City

**Judy Heard**  
St. Louis

**Robert Qualls**  
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**Mary Kay Savage**  
Kansas City

**Mary Stodden**  
St. Charles

**Tim Tadlock**  
Gallatin

**Greg Wingert**  
Lohman

**Brent Yerian**  
Jefferson City

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**C. Jeanne Loyd**  
Jefferson City  
Ex Officio Member  
VR Assistant Commissioner

December 31, 2013

The Honorable Jay Nixon  
Governor of Missouri  
State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Nixon:

On behalf of the members of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council, I am pleased to present the Council's annual report for fiscal year 2013. In these pages, you will find the progress made by Missouri citizens who were served by vocational rehabilitation programs.

Each Council member has unique experiences in advocating for the rights of our fellow Missourians whose physical or mental disabilities may pose barriers to productive employment. Through our quarterly meetings and committee deliberations, we have given our support to Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to empower individuals with disabilities and to encourage decisions that lead to greater self-sufficiency.

We have advised Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation on innovative programming to reach underserved populations in the state, and we have recommended new methods of obtaining consumer satisfaction feedback.

It has been my great privilege to work with members of the Council, as well as with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation staff, all of whom are dedicated to providing our citizens with the opportunity to make choices in obtaining meaningful employment. Employment is a key to independence.

Sincerely,

Dennis W. Atkins  
Chairperson



# STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEMBERS



**Dennis Atkins**  
Viburnum  
Chairperson



**C. Jeanne Loyd**  
Jefferson City  
Ex Officio Member  
VR Assistant Commissioner



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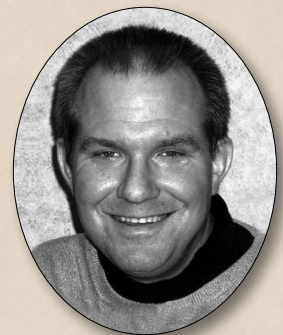
**Mary Stodden**  
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Jefferson City

# COUNCIL'S PURPOSE

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was first authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1998 (referred to hereafter as the Act). Section 105 of the Act requires the state vocational rehabilitation agency to establish a council.

The SRC was initially formed on June 1, 1993. Members are appointed by the governor and serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. As required by the Act, SRC members represent the Statewide Independent Living Council; the Parent Training and Information Center; the Client Assistance Program; the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program; the Office of Special Education, which is the state agency responsible for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the State Workforce Investment Board; community rehabilitation program service providers; disability advocacy groups; current or former applicants/recipients of vocational rehabilitation services; and business, industry and labor.

The SRC is responsible for reviewing, analyzing and advising VR regarding its performance on such issues as eligibility; the extent, scope and effectiveness of services; and any other functions affecting people with disabilities. Full SRC meetings are held quarterly on the first Thursday of February, May, August and November at the VR Central Office in Jefferson City. Subcommittees meet as needed throughout the year via conference calls.

## **During FY13, the SRC was actively involved with VR in the activities below.**

Provided recommendations to VR on policy revisions and rule changes

Coordinated and participated in presentations and activities with other councils and agencies including the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Client Assistance Program, the State Independent Living Council, the Department of Mental Health, the Parent Training and Information Program, the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Program, the Hearing Loss Association, the Governor's Council on Disability, the Division of Workforce Development, and the Office of Special Education

Attended and participated in VR public hearings to provide input on the state plan

Evaluated and provided recommendations on the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services and consumer satisfaction feedback

Analyzed and provided recommendations to VR regarding the state plan's comprehensive statewide needs assessment, goals, priorities, standards and performance indicators, and comprehensive system of personnel development

Assisted VR staff in preparing the SRC's 2013 annual report for the governor and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on the status of vocational rehabilitation services in Missouri

Provided comments to VR regarding issues pertaining to waiting lists (Order of Selection)

# MISSION, VISION & PRINCIPLES

## Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation

### *Mission*

Our mission is to provide opportunities and resources to eligible individuals with disabilities leading to successful employment.

### *Vision*

Our vision is to provide everyone with a great VR experience.

### *Operating Principles*

We will:

- ◆ Act with a sense of urgency.
- ◆ Provide quality customer service.
- ◆ Maximize our resources.
- ◆ Do the right thing.
- ◆ Put people first.
- ◆ Continuously evaluate our practices/processes.

*Helping people with disabilities work successfully*

December 31, 2013

The Honorable Jay Nixon  
Governor of Missouri  
State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Nixon:

The annual report presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for fiscal year 2013 provides information on the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation employment program for individuals with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation has operated under an Order of Selection since October 2003 due to the number of applicants requesting services, rising service costs and limited federal funding. The Rehabilitation Act requires eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to receive services first. All other eligible individuals receive services as funds become available.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation cleared the waiting list for services during FY13 and helped 4,511 individuals reach successful employment outcomes. The program met five of the seven required Federal Standards and Performance Indicators and had a success rate of 59.9 percent for the individuals who received services and exited the program.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with 360 school districts across the state and provides services to more than 9,800 eligible transition-age individuals annually. In FY13, the program assisted over 1,500 transition-age individuals in reaching their employment goals.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation grant dollars expended for purchased client services from community vendors are effective and help local economies. In addition, the total annual increase in earnings from referral to closure for competitively employed clients in FY13 was over \$37 million. The program's customer satisfaction survey results are consistently among the top in the nation.

In closing, the Council and I offer our sincere appreciation for your personal interest and support in serving people with disabilities.

Sincerely,



C. Jeanne Loyd  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services



# VR HIGHLIGHTS

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*Important items to note  
from FY13 regarding  
VR's positive impact  
on the quality  
of consumers' lives  
and the communities  
it serves include:*

- ★ **4,511** consumers with disabilities achieved successful employment outcomes.
- ★ **27,342** eligible consumers worked with VR counselors.
- ★ **97%** of successfully employed consumers had significant disabilities.
- ★ **775** consumers were successfully employed through supported employment services.
- ★ **1,535** transition-age consumers reached successful employment outcomes.
- ★ **360** school districts maintained cooperative work experience agreements with VR.
- ★ **\$37,773,216** was the total annual increase in income from referral to closure for 4,484 competitively employed consumers.

# AGENCY OVERVIEW

Prepared on behalf of the SRC, this annual report highlights various programs and services of VR during federal fiscal year 2013 (Oct. 1, 2012, to Sept. 30, 2013).

On Oct. 1, 2003, due to insufficient funds to serve all eligible consumers, VR began operating under an Order of Selection with three priority categories. Eligible consumers with the most significant disabilities are required by law to receive services first (Category 1). Eligible consumers who have less significant disabilities are required to be placed on a waiting list for services (Categories 2 and 3).

During FY13, VR counselors worked with more than 27,000 eligible people in various categories with an average daily census greater than 16,000. VR helped 4,511 consumers reach successful employment outcomes and cleared the waiting list for services.

Figures 1-2 (below) illustrate the number of successful outcomes and the percentages of success during the past five years. Figure 2 shows that in FY13, more than 59 percent of consumers who received services through VR were successfully employed. This figure is a percentage of all eligible consumers leaving VR who received services.

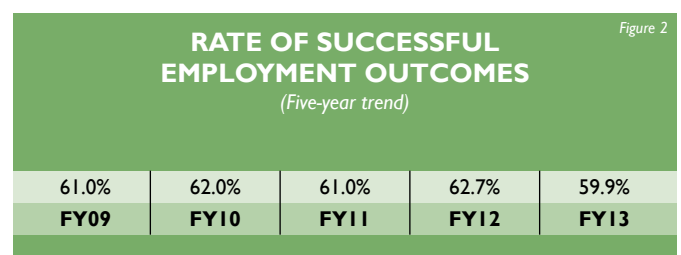
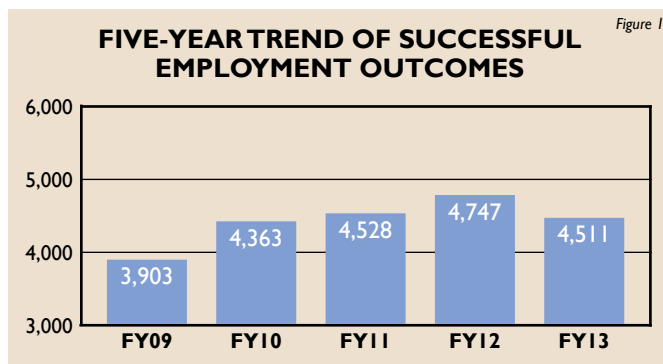
## State Funding and the Social Security Reimbursement Program

VR receives state funding from the general revenue fund, the Missouri Lottery and the Department of Mental Health. The match requirement is 21.3 percent state funding and 78.7 percent federal funding.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) reimburses state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the costs of providing services to assist SSA disability recipients in becoming gainfully employed. In FY13, VR began using



Willie D. Hall demonstrates aerobic moves in the workout room of his Columbia gym. VR provided funding that allowed Hall to lease building space and purchase exercise equipment necessary to start D-Life Fitness.





James de Jong (left), executive director of the Great Plains ADA Center, spoke at the February SRC meeting about the history of the Americans with Disabilities Act and services available through his organization.

the Ticket Tracker software, which interfaces with VR's case-management system. The software automatically tracks and identifies consumers receiving SSA disability benefits whom VR assisted in reaching their employment goals. Ticket Tracker has streamlined the consumer identification and reimbursement submission processes, enabling VR to receive SSA reimbursements in a more timely and efficient manner.

## Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction with staff and services is a VR priority. The SRC is responsible for reviewing and analyzing consumer satisfaction. On behalf of the SRC, VR administers a consumer satisfaction survey (pages 21-22). Feedback is shared with management, supervisors and counselors. This information is used as a tool to improve services, evaluate staff performance and determine training needs.

During FY13, online and mail-out survey tools were utilized to obtain consumer feedback from a random sample of all cases (open and closed). Results showed that 93 percent of consumers surveyed felt they were treated with respect, 86 percent said they were involved in making choices in their employment plans and 84 percent reported their VR experiences were good.

For a complete breakdown of the consumer satisfaction survey, see page 22.

## Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

VR and the SRC jointly conduct an annual comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Missourians with disabilities. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment are incorporated into VR's goals and priorities for the purpose of improving services for individuals with disabilities.

VR uses many methods to collect information for the assessment including consumer satisfaction surveys, public hearings, VR strategic teams, SRC input, VR case data and national census statistics.

Two areas that the assessment specifically focuses on are the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals from populations that have been traditionally unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation programs. The needs assessment completed in FY13 identified the minority populations of Hispanics and African-Americans, along with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), as underserved.

VR implements several strategies to address these areas of need. For strategy information, see pages 17-18.

## Vocational Rehabilitation Teams

VR continues to enlist the aid of teams consisting of agency staff, providers and consumers to develop recommendations for strategic plan issues. The following teams meet on an ad hoc basis: Community Rehabilitation Providers/Vocational Rehabilitation, Transition, Cultural Diversity and Assistive Technology. As a result, many recommendations, which can be found throughout this report, have been implemented to improve services for people with disabilities.



Kevin Miller (standing), supervisor at VR Central Office, presented on VR's data-reporting process during the November SRC meeting.



# INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

## Division of Workforce Development

The Division of Workforce Development operates under the Department of Economic Development. The division ensures that the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 are carried out by workforce development centers across the state. The Missouri Training and Employment Council is the state board that oversees workforce development.

The workforce development system is a partnership of mandated federal, state and local agencies providing services in one-stop shops known as Missouri Career Centers. Located in 14 regions throughout the state, Missouri Career Centers offer job-training and skills-development programs to all citizens who want assistance with gaining employment. VR is a key partner and works closely with Missouri Career Centers to provide program accessibility, physical access to services and assistive technology for people with disabilities. VR also provides ongoing cross-training and technical assistance to their staff on accommodations in the workplace. VR's director of workforce development collaborates with partner agencies to ensure that all federal regulations pertaining to Title IV of WIA are followed. VR professional staff serve as active members on all 14 local Workforce Investment Boards.

## Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Behavioral Health Services and VR started working together in 2009 on a supported employment grant funded by the Johnson & Johnson-Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center project. The mission of the Johnson & Johnson-Dartmouth Community Mental Health Program is to increase access to evidence-based supported employment, also known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS), for adults with serious mental illnesses who are interested in improving their work lives. This national program systematically collaborates with states to implement supported employment following the evidence-based guidelines, initially in a small number of sites (typically three to four) and expanding statewide over time. The program is administered in each participating state through a partnership between the state mental health authority and the state vocational rehabilitation administration. Because funding for the grant has ended, this program has moved beyond the pilot stage to sustaining current sites and expanding to different locations throughout the state.

Missouri has 11 Community Mental Health/Treatment Centers (CMHCs) participating in this implementation collaborative. Ongoing technical assistance and fidelity reviews to the evidence-based practice are provided by a state trainer and a team consisting of VR and DMH employees. Three sites have improved to "exemplary" fidelity and have increased the number of people successfully employed in competitive jobs. The partnership between DMH and VR includes a training format, offered to interested CMHCs statewide, on adopting IPS and on improving existing employment activities within treatment services.

## Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based nonresidential programs designed to promote independent living for people with disabilities. In Missouri, there are 22 CILs that offer independent living services. The CILs are funded through VR grants and are managed by local boards composed of individuals with disabilities who have been successful in establishing their own independent lifestyles.

VR works with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the CILs to provide direct services to individuals with disabilities. This year, the SILC, VR and the CILs collaborated to develop the 2014-2016 State Plan for Independent Living. The plan contains three main goals: 1) identify and respond to the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities in Missouri, 2) provide a responsive network of supports and services to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, and 3) improve the quality of life for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. ([Click here](#) to download the complete plan.)

As part of a collaborative effort to evaluate program effectiveness, VR and the SILC utilize an outcome-based measurement tool for the CILs. This tool measures consumer satisfaction with various services provided by the centers. The most recent survey results revealed that 97 percent of respondents were satisfied with independent living skills training, personal assistance services and emergency assistance services.

## TRANSITION SERVICES

The Rehabilitation Services Administration defines transition-age consumers as individuals with disabilities ages 16 through 24. VR assists these consumers either in or outside of the secondary school setting to successfully prepare them for moving into postsecondary education, integrated employment (including supported employment) or vocational training.

In striving to improve and expand the quality of services for transition-age consumers with significant disabilities in high school, VR provides support and technical assistance to local school districts. In addition, the Transition Team – which is composed of personnel from VR, school districts and other state/community agencies – provides support on transition-related activities and services for youths with disabilities.

A team represented by the CILs, local education agencies and VR created and released a resource toolkit to strengthen collaboration in transition planning for young adults with disabilities. The toolkit focuses on joint service delivery and contains valuable transition-related resources.

### FY13 Transition Services Facts

- ◆ **1,535** transition-age consumers reached successful employment outcomes.
- ◆ **63%** of all transition-age consumers who received VR services and exited the program achieved successful employment outcomes.
- ◆ **9,810** eligible transition-age consumers worked with VR counselors.
- ◆ **360** school districts maintained cooperative work experience agreements with VR.



Heather Parnell (left), VR counselor, and Duane Shumate (right), VR district supervisor, presented information on the Seamless Transitions through Enhanced Partnership (STEP) program during the August SRC meeting. STEP helps to improve the transition from high school to the workforce for students with disabilities.

# COMMUNITY REHAB PROGRAMS

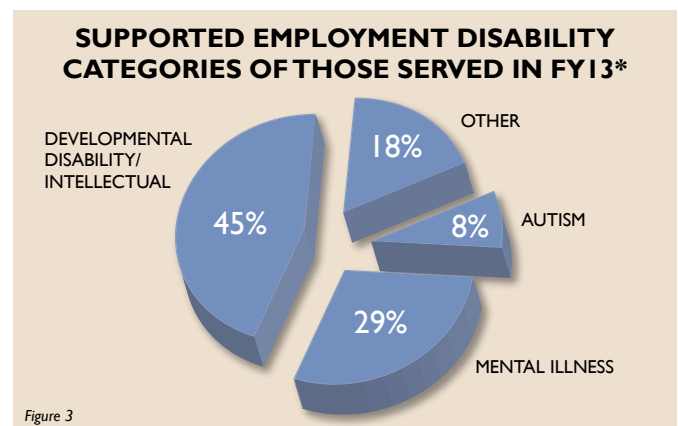
VR strives to enhance community rehabilitation services throughout Missouri. VR and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) collaboratively work with a new outcome-based service model that emphasizes quality employment outcomes. CRPs are nonprofit organizations accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. They provide people with vocational planning, job development and placement services, skills training, specialized employment services, and supported employment.

During FY13, VR counselors developed employment plans with 8,209 consumers who received services at CRPs, which are all independently owned and operated. The CRP/VR Team composed of CRP staff and VR managers, supervisors and counselors meets periodically to improve community-based employment services for individuals with disabilities. This team developed and continues to refine a model of employment services that took effect on Oct. 1, 2010. The model has four outcomes and promotes collaboration among the consumer, the VR counselor and the CRP. Milestones include the development of employment plans, placement, retention and successful employment outcomes. VR worked with the team to develop incentives for CRPs based on whether consumers are placed in employment at or above 55 percent of state average wages. Incentive areas are reviewed annually to determine if they are needed based upon VR's comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

VR provides Supported Employment (SE) services to a diverse population of consumers as indicated by Figures 3-5 (pages 15-16). SE is defined as competitive work in an integrated work setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. During FY13, 58.9 percent of consumers who received SE services and exited the program were successfully employed.

In FY13, VR worked with 84 CRPs that provide SE services and cover all counties in Missouri. VR and the CRP/VR Team also developed an outcome-based model of SE services, which was implemented on Oct. 1, 2012. The new model features a period of discovery and exploration with the consumer to develop vocational direction and community-based job exploration. Outcomes include job placement, 30 days of independent employment and 90 days of employment. In addition to these milestones, on-the-job and off-site supports may also be authorized for consumers.



### Other Supported Employment Statistics

VR places an emphasis on the development of natural support systems to help consumers participating in supported employment to successfully remain in the workforce. These natural supports help to reduce the costs of providing SE services. Figure 6 (page 16) shows the hourly wages, average costs of services and other statistics for supported employment.

### SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT ETHNICITY AND GENDER OF THOSE SERVED\* • FY13 •

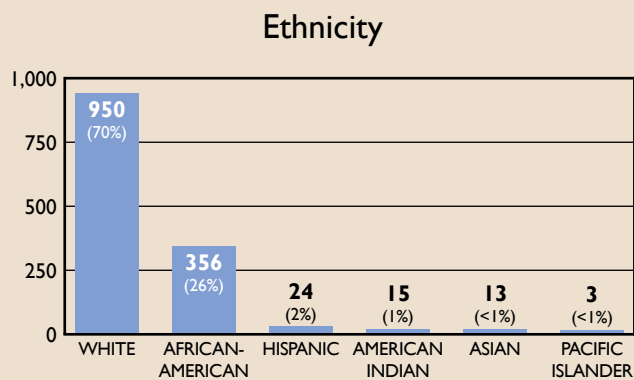


Figure 4

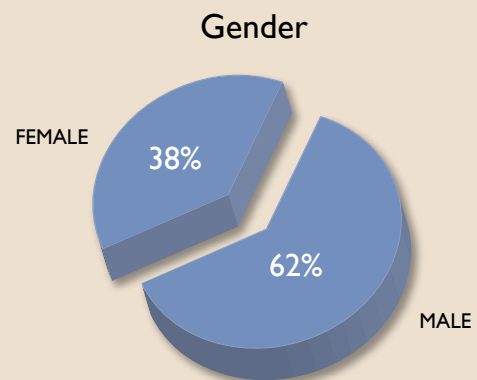


Figure 5

### OTHER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS FOR FY13

Figure 6

Average cost of job coaching services per consumer . . . . .	\$2,732*
Average cost of assessment services per consumer . . . . .	\$1,647*
Average cost of job development services per consumer . . . . .	\$1,174*
Average hourly wage per consumer . . . . .	\$8.15
Average hours per week worked per consumer . . . . .	.23
Success rate . . . . .	58.9%*
Successful closures . . . . .	775
Unsuccessful closures after services rendered . . . . .	586

\*Statistics are based on the number of consumers who exited the program either successfully or unsuccessfully after receiving SE services.



# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

In FY13, VR provided a variety of assistive technology services, devices and equipment to 411 individuals who received services and exited the program, for a total cost of \$2,299,817. VR purchases assistive devices to help consumers with increasing, maintaining or improving functional capabilities. These devices may be purchased commercially or modified/customized by a technology specialist. Devices could be as simple as a modified door handle or as sophisticated as a voice-controlled computer system. Other types include prosthetic and orthotic equipment, hearing aids, wheelchairs, and other powered mobility equipment. Assistive technology services include evaluation, design, customization, adaptation, maintenance, repair, therapy and technical training.

VR has appointed an Assistive Technology Team to help meet consumers' needs. Some issues the team focuses on include best case practices; ongoing training; vehicle modification guidelines; and mobility, augmentative and computer assistive technology assessments. Also, a VR staff member is a representative on the Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) Advisory Council.

In April, MoAT sponsored the statewide Power Up 2013 Conference and Expo that was open to service providers, consumers, independent living specialists, VR staff and other professionals in the rehabilitation field. Seventeen of VR's professional staff attended the event. The conference was successful in providing consumers and professionals with an opportunity to view state-of-the-art technology and equipment designed to enhance and promote the independence and quality of life of people with disabilities.

## DIVERSITY & UNDERSERVED

Improving services for underserved populations and workplace diversity are two significant priorities for VR and the SRC. Figure 7 (below) reflects the closure percentages by ethnicity for FY12 and FY13. This chart illustrates that African-American consumers continue to represent disproportionately higher rates of unsuccessful outcomes. VR remains committed to improving services, increasing employment outcomes and reducing the number of consumers from underserved populations who drop out prior to receiving services.

Figure 7

<b>CLOSURE PERCENTAGES BY ETHNICITY*</b> (Comparison of FY12 and FY13 consumers)						
STATUS	WHITE		AFRICAN-AMERICAN		OTHER	
Successful employment outcomes	77%	77%	19%	19%	4%	4%
Closed unsuccessfully after services	71%	71%	25%	25%	4%	4%
Closed after eligibility before services	72%	70%	24%	26%	4%	4%
	FY12	FY13	FY12	FY13	FY12	FY13

\*Percentages reflect the total number of consumers in each status.

### Cultural Diversity and Underserved Populations

During FY13, VR provided employees with training opportunities on cultural competency that covered all aspects of diversity. VR conducted a comprehensive statewide needs assessment that identified individuals with ASD, individuals with TBI, and individuals from the Hispanic and African-American communities as being

underserved. VR utilizes the following strategies to address these areas of need:

- ◆ VR employs a part-time diversity consultant to assist with improving services to underserved areas, developing training programs and establishing outreach strategies for consumers from diverse cultures.
- ◆ The Cultural Diversity Team (composed of CRP staff, the diversity consultant and VR district office staff) meets throughout the year to develop strategies for serving individuals from diverse cultures.
- ◆ VR has appointed an autism services liaison to serve as a resource for its staff throughout the state. This liaison works with providers on strategies for better serving individuals with ASD.
- ◆ VR has developed Employment Services Plus, which is designed to assist individuals with ASD, TBI or cultural deafness/hearing loss who require additional supports to reach successful employment outcomes.



Kim Conrad, VR district supervisor and assistant director of autism services, spoke at the November SRC meeting about the Emerging Model for VR Autism Services, a pilot project in which VR is involved.

## FY13 EMPLOYEE DIVERSITY

### EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

Counselors . . . . .	30%
District and assistant supervisors . . . . .	26%
Administrators . . . . .	19%
Total professional staff . . . . .	27%
Support staff . . . . .	14%

### MINORITY EMPLOYEES

Counselors . . . . .	14%
African-American . . .	8%
Other . . . . .	6%
District and assistant supervisors . . . . .	13%
African-American . . .	10%
Other . . . . .	3%
Administrators . . . . .	8%
African-American . . .	8%
Total professional staff . . . . .	13%
African-American . . .	8%
Other . . . . .	5%
Support staff . . . . .	19%
African-American . . .	15%
Other . . . . .	4%

Figure 8

## Diversity in the Workplace

VR strives to recruit, hire and maintain a diverse workforce. Figure 8 (left) shows the specific categories of VR employees as of Sept. 30, 2013.

VR recruits individuals with culturally diverse backgrounds. All job openings are listed on the VR and Missouri Career Source websites and are sent to the CILs. Vacancies are advertised in local newspapers as well as African-American and Hispanic newspapers. All VR counselor vacancy notices are sent to historically black colleges and universities such as Lincoln University in Jefferson City; Southern University in Baton Rouge, La.; Fort Valley State College in Fort Valley, Ga.; and Jackson State University in Jackson, Miss. Recruitment contacts have been made with all colleges in Missouri that have a high population of minority students. VR continues to participate in recruitment activities, career fairs and various community programs.

VR also works to recruit individuals with disabilities. All district supervisors and counselors receive job vacancy notices. Many of the individuals referred by staff are interviewed and hired or participate in field experiences and internships sponsored by VR. At the time of this report, approximately 30 percent of the counselor positions were held by individuals with disabilities.

In addition to VR's recruitment efforts, all staff participate in cultural diversity training initially provided during new employee orientation. This ongoing training, held across the state during FY13, has received positive feedback and is an outcome of one of the Cultural Diversity Team's recommendations.

# ONE STEP AT A TIME

BY JACOB WEGMAN, EDITORIAL CONSULTANT,  
MISSOURI VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

When Avery Brown was a student in a traditional high school classroom, he was uncommunicative and required a paraprofessional to interact with others on his behalf.

That changed after he was selected to participate in the Seamless Transitions through Enhanced Partnership (STEP) program.

A collaboration among Boone Hospital Center, Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation, Columbia Public Schools, Boone County Family Resources and Alternative Community Training, the STEP program helps prepare high school students with intellectual or developmental disabilities for the world of work through internships served at Boone Hospital. VR provides partial funding for the program.

Participants are referred by case managers at their schools or by other long-term support agencies. Heather Parnell, a VR counselor who works with STEP, said the program targets transition students unlikely to attend higher education to keep them from “falling off the radar” after graduation.

She said the difference in Brown’s demeanor was evident almost immediately after he joined STEP.

“When he got to the STEP classroom, which is just across the street from (Boone Hospital), within a matter of a week he started talking to his other peers,” Parnell said.

Students start out by spending time in the classroom and learning skills that will give them an idea of what it’s like to be employed in a competitive environment. They spend time job-shadowing in order to get exposure to different types of careers they might find interesting.

Later in the semester, they learn how to prepare for presenting themselves to employers at job interviews. All STEP participants must go on actual interviews in order to secure their internships.



Avery Brown cleans linens and delivers scrubs at Boone Hospital Center. He transitioned from an internship to permanent employment while participating in the STEP program.

“We try to make it as real as possible,” Parnell said.

While some participants have moved on to other jobs in the community, Brown was doing so well in the linens department that the hospital hired him to work on a permanent basis.

“It was a smooth transition,” Parnell said.

For his part, Brown said he likes having a job where he knows what’s going to happen on a day-to-day basis. Earning a regular income means that he can not only save money, but he can also indulge his love of classic video game systems available on eBay.

“I mostly buy old video games,” he said. “Stuff that’s been outdated for at least 10 years.”

Brown’s sense of humor becomes even more evident when asked if he enjoys receiving a paycheck for his job.

“Who doesn’t?” Brown said.

(For more information about STEP, please [click here](#) to watch a video produced by Boone Hospital Center about the program.)

# APPENDICES

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## Consumer Satisfaction Survey

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# CONSUMER SATISFACTION

The SRC's Program Evaluation Committee continues to work with VR on surveying and monitoring consumer satisfaction. In FY13, VR implemented a new consumer feedback method that utilizes both online and mail-out surveys. This process enables VR to reach a larger audience and offers consumers an additional way to provide input on their services.

On behalf of the SRC, VR surveyed a random sample of 5,565 consumers at various stages in the rehabilitation process, with a response rate of 13 percent. Survey feedback was positive; the results are listed on page 22.

## FY13 CONSUMER COMMENTS

“My VR counselor **WAS THE BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO ME.**”

“Everything that was put in place for me **WAS HELPFUL AND ALSO APPRECIATED.**”

“The service that VR provided for me **HAS HELPED ME AT MY JOB AND IN DAY-TO-DAY LIFE** more than I could ever describe.”

“I think **VR IS THE BEST THING OUT THERE.**”

“They (VR) were excellent. I had **A LOT OF CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION** when I was working with them.”

“I had a great experience with VR and could never have made it through school without them. **MY COUNSELOR WAS GREAT, AND I WOULD RECOMMEND HER TO ANYONE.**”

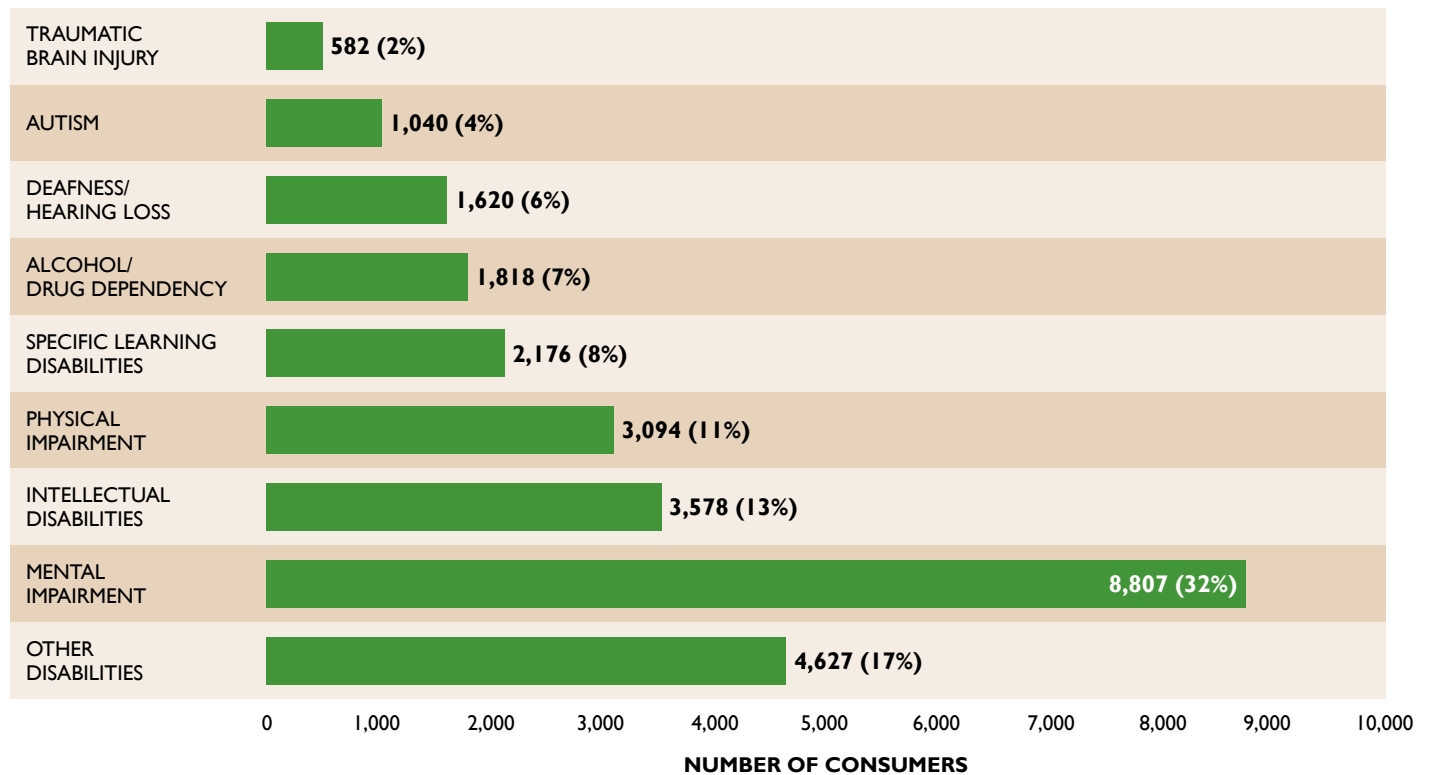
“VR has helped me immensely, and **I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL!**”

<b>Survey Results</b> <i>(Specific group responses during FY13)</i>	TOTAL RESPONSES RECEIVED	TREATED ME WITH RESPECT		TIMELY MANNER		HELPED UNDERSTAND DISABILITY		INVOLVED IN CHOICES		EXPERIENCE WAS GOOD	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
<b>TOTAL RESPONSES</b>	811	93%	7%	83%	17%	82%	18%	86%	14%	84%	16%
PERSONS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES (CATEGORIES I AND II)	769	93%	7%	83%	17%	82%	18%	87%	13%	84%	16%
OPEN CASES	339	95%	5%	83%	17%	88%	12%	91%	9%	89%	11%
SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES	247	96%	4%	90%	10%	89%	11%	95%	5%	92%	8%
UNSUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES; CLOSED BEFORE SERVICES	121	76%	24%	70%	30%	58%	42%	66%	34%	62%	38%
UNSUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES; CLOSED AFTER SERVICES	104	96%	4%	80%	20%	76%	24%	82%	18%	75%	25%
MALE	375	93%	7%	85%	15%	84%	16%	85%	15%	87%	13%
FEMALE	436	92%	8%	81%	19%	80%	20%	87%	13%	81%	19%
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT CONSUMERS	126	91%	9%	85%	15%	84%	16%	88%	12%	84%	16%
PERSONS WITH ALCOHOL OR DRUG DEPENDENCY	34	83%	17%	76%	24%	78%	22%	73%	27%	69%	31%
PERSONS WITH AUTISM	33	100%	0%	97%	3%	85%	15%	94%	6%	88%	12%
PERSONS WITH DEAFNESS/ HEARING LOSS	76	92%	8%	86%	14%	87%	13%	92%	8%	90%	10%
PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES	76	95%	5%	94%	6%	96%	4%	96%	4%	92%	8%
PERSONS WITH MENTAL IMPAIRMENTS	243	92%	8%	76%	24%	73%	27%	85%	15%	78%	22%
PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS	129	92%	8%	85%	15%	85%	15%	87%	13%	87%	13%
PERSONS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES	35	91%	9%	80%	20%	86%	14%	86%	14%	83%	17%
PERSONS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY	14	100%	0%	100%	0%	87%	13%	100%	0%	100%	0%
PERSONS WITH OTHER DISABILITIES	228	91%	9%	84%	16%	85%	15%	88%	12%	88%	12%

## DISABILITY CATEGORIES of the 27,342 eligible consumers

FY13

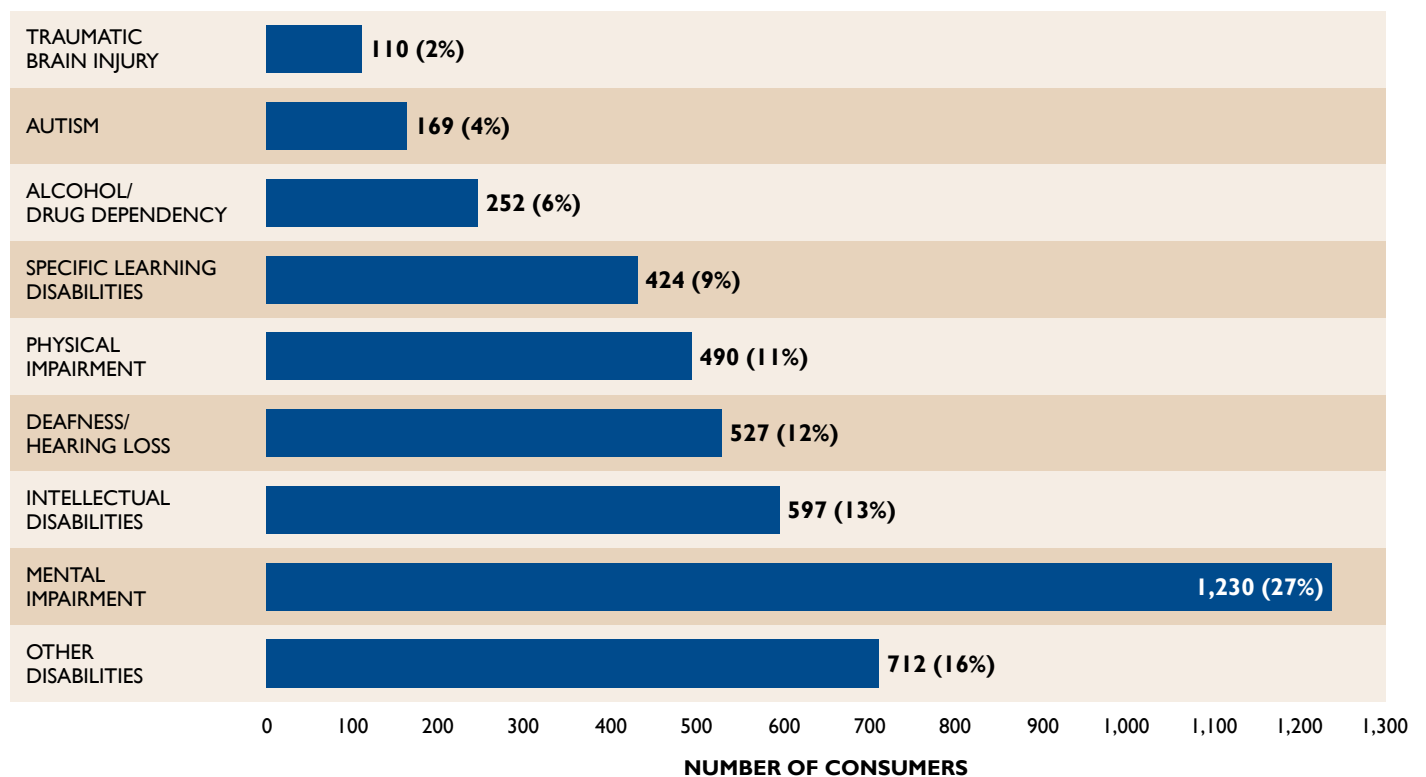
### TYPE OF DISABILITY



## DISABILITY CATEGORIES of the 4,511 consumers with successful employment outcomes

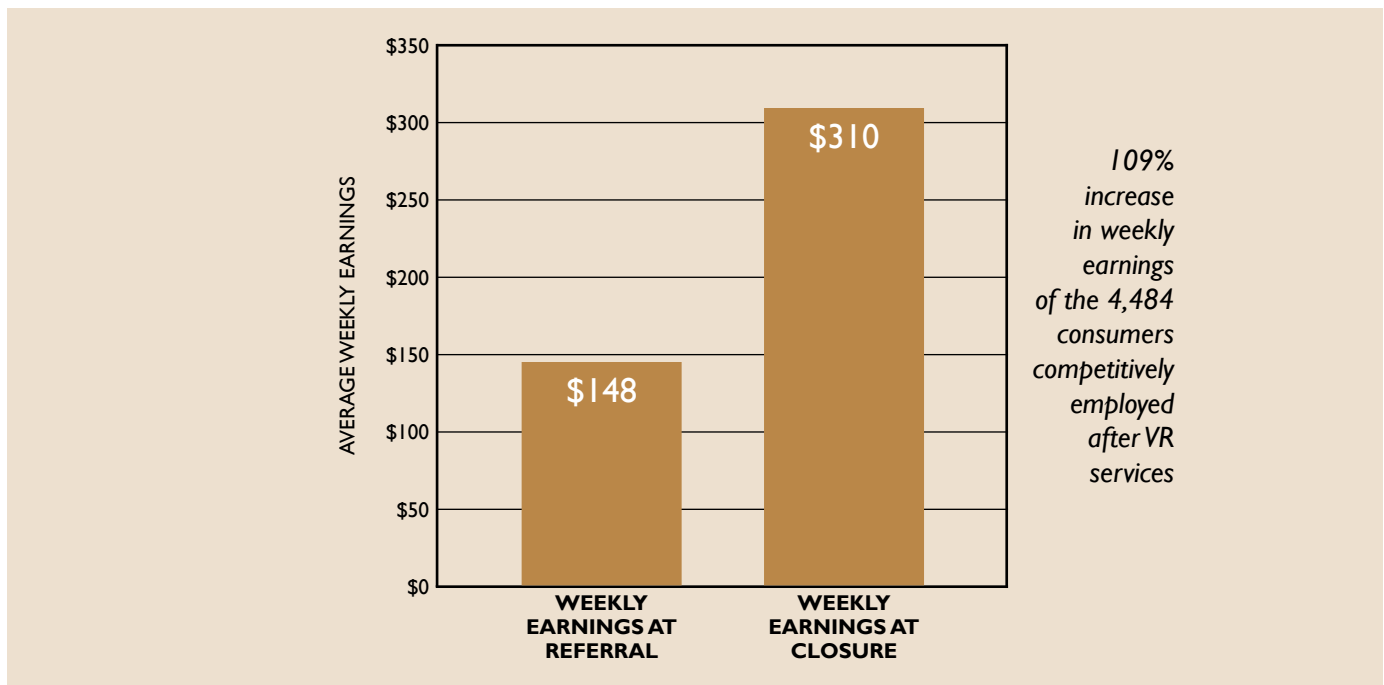
FY13

### TYPE OF DISABILITY



## IMPACT OF VR SERVICES on weekly earnings of consumers with successful employment outcomes

FY13



With an increase in average weekly earnings of \$162 for the 4,484 competitively employed consumers, the total annual increase in income from referral to closure amounted to \$37,773,216.

## CHARACTERISTICS of consumers with successful employment outcomes

FY13

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Male	2,624	58%
Female	1,887	42%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,511</b>	<b>100%</b>

ETHNICITY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
White	3,457	77%
African-American	872	19%
Hispanic	83	2%
American Indian	58	1%
Asian	32	<1%
Pacific Islander	9	<1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,511</b>	<b>100%</b>

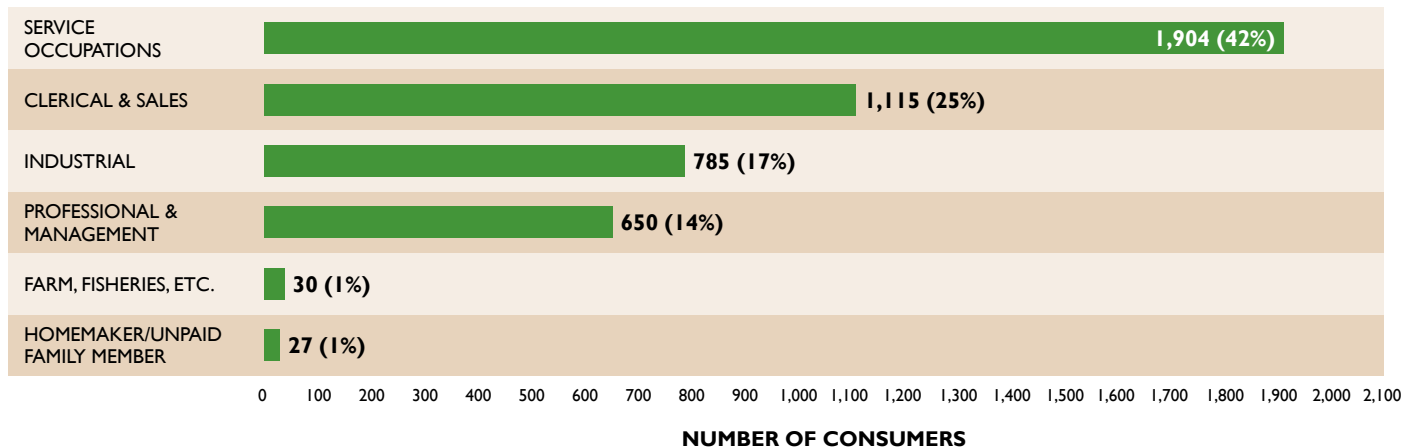
AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than 20 years	332	7%
20 through 34	1,901	42%
35 through 44	760	17%
45 through 64	1,360	30%
65 and over	158	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,511</b>	<b>100%</b>



## OCCUPATIONS of the 4,511 consumers with successful employment outcomes

FY13

### OCCUPATION



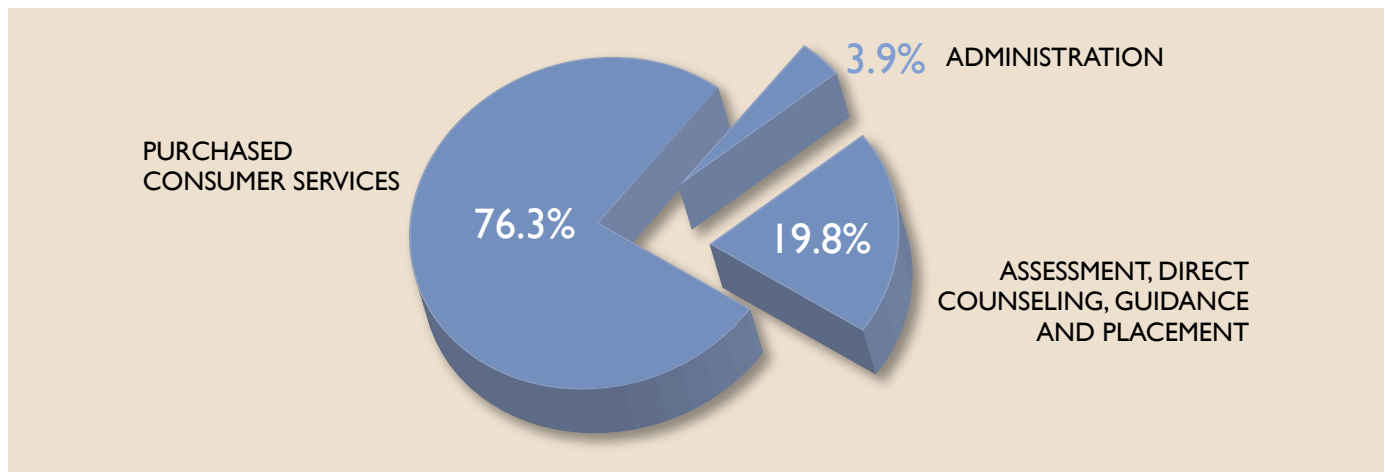
## STANDARDS and Performance Indicators report

FY13

INDICATORS	FEDERAL STANDARDS	MISSOURI VR RESULTS
1.1 Change in Employment Outcomes	≥ Previous year	-236
1.2 Percentage of Employment Outcomes	55.8%	59.9%
1.3 Competitive Employment Outcomes	72.6%	99.4%
1.4 Competitive Employment Outcomes with a Significant Disability	62.4%	97.3%
1.5 Ratio of Exit Wage to State Average Pay	.52	.51
1.6 Difference in the Exiter vs. Application Income as a Single Source of Support	53%	73.2%
2.1 Service Rate of Minority to Non-Minority Individuals with Disabilities	.80	.91

## EXPENDITURES

FY13



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**DECEMBER 2013**

Published by Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation  
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
3024 Dupont Circle, Jefferson City, MO 65109  
Website: [vr.dese.mo.gov](http://vr.dese.mo.gov)

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